

The Condition of Education 2010

Indicator 41

Undergraduate Fields of Study

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2010*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2010*, visit the NCES website (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2010028>) or contact ED Pubs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

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Undergraduate Fields of Study

In 2007–08, degrees in the field of business made up 21 percent of the bachelor's degrees awarded. Approximately 335,300 bachelor's degrees were awarded in business that year.

Of the 1.6 million bachelor's degrees awarded in 2007–08, over 50 percent were concentrated in five fields: business (21 percent), social sciences and history (11 percent), health professions and related clinical sciences (7 percent), education (7 percent), and psychology (6 percent) (see table A-41-1). The fields of visual and performing arts (6 percent), engineering and engineering technologies (5 percent), communication and communications technologies (5 percent), and biological and biomedical sciences (5 percent) represented an additional 20 percent of all bachelor's degrees awarded in 2007–08.

Overall, there was a 32 percent increase in the number of bachelor's degrees awarded from 1997–98 to 2007–08 (an increase of 378,700 bachelor's degrees awarded). Bachelor's degrees awarded in the field of parks, recreation, leisure and fitness studies had the largest percent increase of all fields (from 15,400 to 29,900 degrees, a 94 percent increase). The next largest percent increases were in the fields of visual and performing arts (from 52,100 to 87,700 degrees, a 68 percent increase) and communication and communication technology (from 50,300 to 81,000 degrees, a 61 percent increase). Education was the only field to decrease over this time period (3 percent).

About 57 percent of all bachelor's degrees conferred in 2007–08 were awarded to females. Looking at the five most prevalent degree fields, females earned between 49 and 85 percent of the degrees awarded in those fields. In 2007–08, females earned fewer bachelor's degrees than males in fields such as engineering and engineering technologies (17 percent of these degrees were awarded to females), computer and information sciences and support services (18 percent female), and physical sciences and science technologies (41 percent female). Between 1997–98 and 2007–08, there were changes in the percentage of bachelor's degrees conferred to females in several fields of study. For example, of all the bachelor's degrees conferred in the field of security and protective

services, the percentage that were conferred to females increased from 40 to 49 percent. In contrast, of all the bachelor's degrees conferred in the field of computer and information sciences and support services, the percentage conferred to females decreased from 27 to 18 percent. Between 1997–98 and 2007–08, the number of degrees conferred in education increased for females but decreased for males.

Of the 750,200 associate's degrees earned in 2007–08, 55 percent were awarded in two broad areas of study: liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities (34 percent) and health professions and related clinical sciences (21 percent). Overall, there was a 34 percent increase in the number of associate's degrees awarded from 1997–98 to 2007–08 (an increase of 191,600 associate's degrees awarded). The number of degrees awarded in the field of social sciences and history increased by the greatest percentage (86 percent) over this time period. Several fields experienced a decline in the number of associate's degrees awarded; for example, 4,400 fewer associate's degrees were awarded in engineering and engineering technologies in 2007–08 than in 1997–98 (a decrease of 8 percent).

Females earned 62 percent of all associate's degrees awarded in 2007–08. Females earned the majority (96 percent) of all associate's degrees awarded in the field of family and consumer sciences/human sciences. Females earned fewer associate's degrees than males in fields such as precision production (7 percent of these degrees were awarded to females) and engineering and engineering technologies (10 percent female).



For more information: *Table A-41-1; Indicators 40 and 42*

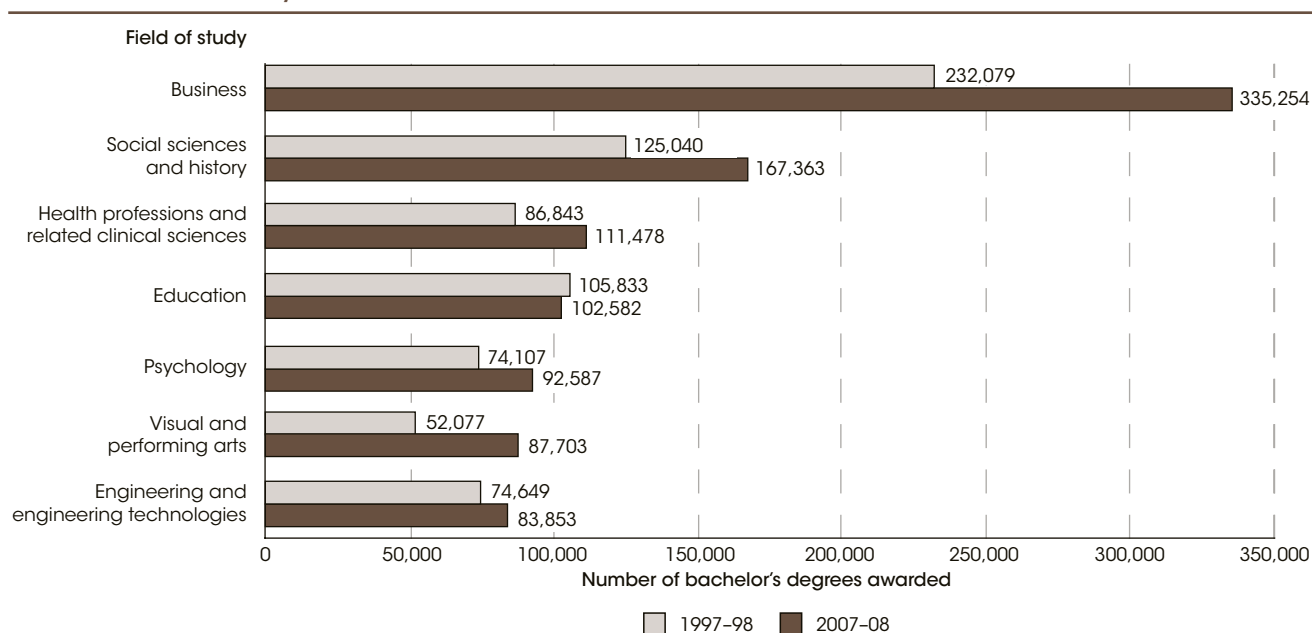
Glossary: *Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree; Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP), Undergraduate student*

Technical Notes

The percent increases discussed in this indicator refer to aggregate fields of study. For more information on fields of study for postsecondary degrees, see *supplemental note 9*. The new *Classification of Instructional Programs* was initiated in 2002–03. Estimates for 1997–98 have been reclassified when necessary to conform to the new

taxonomy. For more information on the Classification of Postsecondary Education Institutions, see *supplemental note 8*. For more information on the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), see *supplemental note 3*.

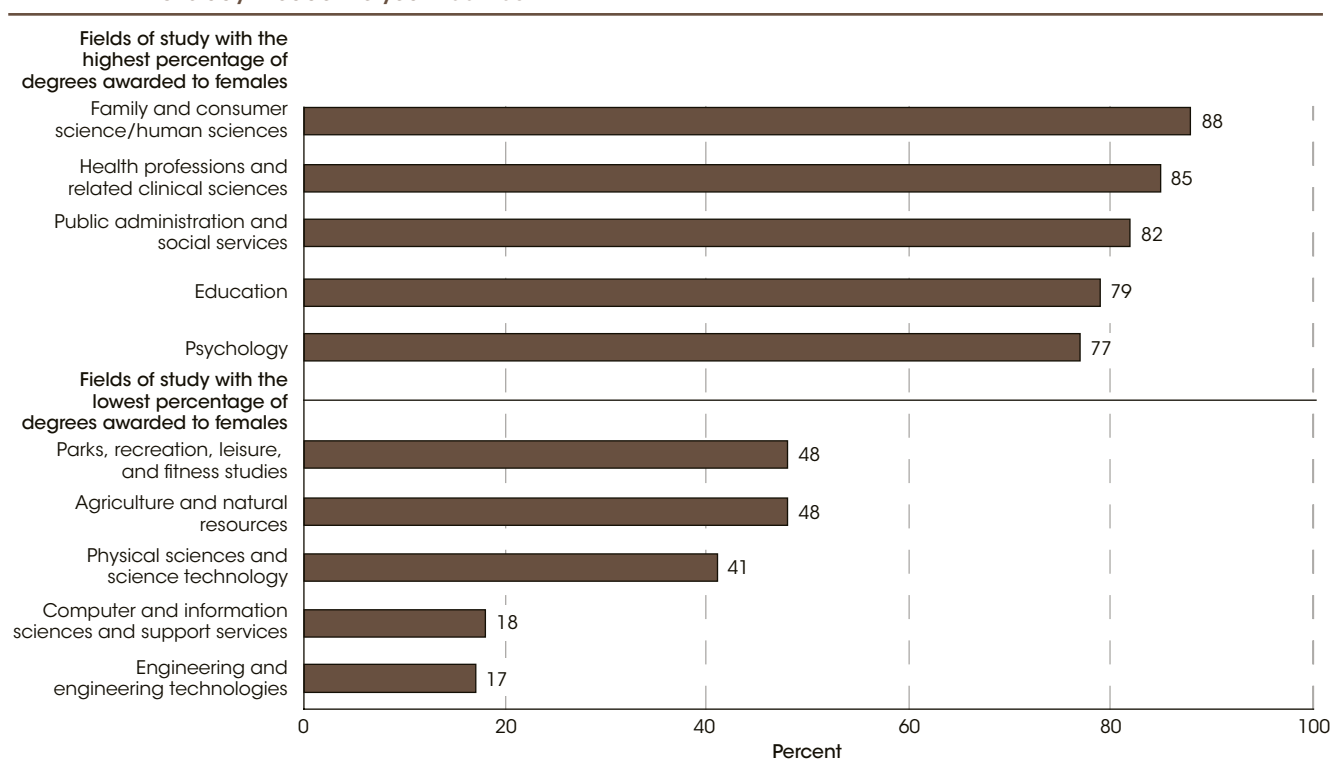
Figure 41-1. Number of bachelor's degrees awarded by degree-granting institutions in selected fields of study: Academic years 1997-98 and 2007-08



NOTE: For more information on fields of study for postsecondary degrees, see *supplemental note 9*. The new *Classification of Instructional Programs* was initiated in 2002-03. Estimates for 1997-98 have been reclassified when necessary to conform to the new taxonomy. For more information on the Classification of Postsecondary Education Institutions, see *supplemental note 8*. For more information on the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), see *supplemental note 3*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1997-98 and 2007-08 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, "Completions Survey" (IPEDS-C:98) and Fall 2008.

Figure 41-2. Percentage of bachelor's degrees awarded to females by degree-granting institutions in selected fields of study: Academic year 2007-08



NOTE: For more information on fields of study for postsecondary degrees, see *supplemental note 9*. For more information on the Classification of Postsecondary Education Institutions, see *supplemental note 8*. For more information on the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), see *supplemental note 3*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2007-08 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, "Completions Survey," Fall 2008.

Supplemental Table to Indicator 41

Undergraduate Fields of Study

Table A-41-1. Number of associate's and bachelor's degrees awarded by degree-granting institutions, percentage of total, number and percentage awarded to females, and percent change, by selected fields of study: Academic years 1997-98 and 2007-08

Field of study	1997-98				2007-08				1997-98 to 2007-08		
	Number	Percent of total	Number of female	Percent females	Number	Percent of total	Number of female	Percent females	Change in number of degrees	Percent change	Percent change for females
Associate's degrees											
Total¹	558,555	100.0	340,942	61.0	750,164	100.0	467,643	62.3	191,609	34.3	37.2
Liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities	186,248	33.3	115,636	62.1	254,012	33.9	158,574	62.4	67,764	36.4	37.1
Health professions and related clinical sciences	94,940	17.0	80,578	84.9	155,816	20.8	132,882	85.3	60,876	64.1	64.9
Business	95,320	17.1	66,914	70.2	121,158	16.2	77,913	64.3	25,838	27.1	16.4
Engineering and engineering technologies	55,650	10.0	7,044	12.7	51,226	6.8	5,339	10.4	-4,424	-7.9	-24.2
Security and protective services	19,002	3.4	6,182	32.5	29,590	3.9	13,539	45.8	10,588	55.7	119.0
Computer and information sciences	18,185	3.3	8,462	46.5	28,296	3.8	7,105	25.1	10,111	55.6	-16.0
Visual and performing arts	14,980	2.7	8,207	54.8	18,890	2.5	11,963	63.3	3,910	26.1	45.8
Multi/interdisciplinary studies	9,402	1.7	4,861	51.7	16,255	2.2	9,706	59.7	6,853	72.9	99.7
Education	9,461	1.7	7,164	75.7	13,108	1.7	11,194	85.4	3,647	38.5	56.3
Legal professions and studies	9,890	1.8	8,893	89.9	9,465	1.3	8,455	89.3	-425	-4.3	-4.9
Family and consumer services	7,811	1.4	7,151	91.6	8,613	1.1	8,269	96.0	802	10.3	15.6
Social sciences and history	4,196	0.8	2,632	62.7	7,812	1.0	5,053	64.7	3,616	86.2	92.0
Communications and communications technologies	5,010	0.9	2,401	47.9	6,857	0.9	2,618	38.2	1,847	36.9	9.0
Agriculture and natural resources	6,673	1.2	2,214	33.2	5,738	0.8	2,140	37.3	-935	-14.0	-3.3
Public administration and social service professions	4,156	0.7	3,464	83.3	4,192	0.6	3,623	86.4	36	0.9	4.6
Physical science and science technologies	2,286	0.4	1,187	51.9	3,388	0.5	1,434	42.3	1,102	48.2	20.8
Psychology	1,765	0.3	1,161	65.8	2,412	0.3	1,858	77.0	647	36.7	60.0
Biological and biomedical sciences	2,113	0.4	1,331	63.0	2,200	0.3	1,533	69.7	87	4.1	15.2
Precision production	1,929	0.3	222	11.5	1,968	0.3	130	6.6	39	2.0	-41.4
Transportation and materials moving	977	0.2	155	15.9	1,550	0.2	242	15.6	573	58.6	56.1

See notes at end of table.

Table A-41-1. Number of associate's and bachelor's degrees awarded by degree-granting institutions, percentage of total, number and percentage awarded to females, and percent change, by selected fields of study: Academic years 1997-98 and 2007-08—Continued

Field of study	1997-98				2007-08				1997-98 to 2007-08		
	Number	Percent of total	Number of female	Percent females	Number	Percent of total	Number of female	Percent females	Change in number of degrees	Percent change	Percent change for females
Bachelor's degrees											
Total¹	1,184,394	100.0	664,450	56.1	1,563,069	100.0	895,141	57.3	378,675	32.0	34.7
Business	232,079	19.6	112,700	48.6	335,254	21.4	164,276	49.0	103,175	44.5	45.8
Social sciences and history	125,040	10.6	61,503	49.2	167,363	10.7	82,495	49.3	42,323	33.8	34.1
Health professions and related clinical sciences	86,843	7.3	71,143	81.9	111,478	7.1	95,192	85.4	24,635	28.4	33.8
Education	105,833	8.9	79,548	75.2	102,582	6.6	80,754	78.7	-3251	-3.1	1.5
Psychology	74,107	6.3	55,131	74.4	92,587	5.9	71,385	77.1	18,480	24.9	29.5
Visual and performing arts	52,077	4.4	30,594	58.7	87,703	5.6	53,841	61.4	35,626	68.4	76.0
Engineering and engineering technologies	74,649	6.3	12,694	17.0	83,853	5.4	14,129	16.8	9,204	12.3	11.3
Communication and communications technologies	50,263	4.2	30,160	60.0	81,048	5.2	50,664	62.5	30,785	61.2	68.0
Biological and biomedical sciences	65,583	5.5	36,072	55.0	77,854	5.0	46,217	59.4	12,271	18.7	28.1
English language and literature/letters	49,016	4.1	32,736	66.8	55,038	3.5	37,357	67.9	6,022	12.3	14.1
Liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities	33,202	2.8	21,336	64.3	46,940	3.0	31,064	66.2	13,738	41.4	45.6
Security and protective services	25,076	2.1	10,142	40.4	40,235	2.6	20,086	49.9	15,159	60.5	98.0
Computer and information sciences and support services	27,829	2.3	7,457	26.8	38,476	2.5	6,782	17.6	10,647	38.3	-9.1
Multi/interdisciplinary studies	26,960	2.3	17,844	66.2	36,149	2.3	24,870	68.8	9,189	34.1	39.4
Parks, recreation, leisure and fitness studies	15,422	1.3	7,652	49.6	29,931	1.9	14,316	47.8	14,509	94.1	87.1
Agriculture and natural resources	23,276	2.0	9,470	40.7	24,113	1.5	11,479	47.6	837	3.6	21.2
Public administration and social service professions	20,408	1.7	16,527	81.0	23,493	1.5	19,291	82.1	3,085	15.1	16.7
Physical sciences and science technologies	19,362	1.6	7,438	38.4	21,934	1.4	8,975	40.9	2,572	13.3	20.7
Family and consumer sciences/human sciences	15,654	1.3	13,855	88.5	21,870	1.4	19,211	87.8	6,216	39.7	38.7
Foreign languages, literatures, and linguistics	15,279	1.3	10,694	70.0	20,977	1.3	14,723	70.2	5,698	37.3	37.7

¹ Includes other fields not shown separately.

NOTE: For more information on fields of study for postsecondary degrees, see *supplemental note 9*. The new *Classification of Instructional Programs* was initiated in 2002-03. Estimates for 1997-98 have been reclassified when necessary to conform to the new taxonomy. For more information on the *Classification of Postsecondary Education Institutions*, see *supplemental note 8*. For more information on the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), see *supplemental note 3*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1997-98 and 2007-08 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, "Completions Survey" (IPEDS-C:98) and Fall 2008.